



POTENTIAL

Ensuring Reproductive Rights
and Choices for all



Annual Report 2018
Sri Lanka



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Ensuring Reproductive Rights
and Choices for all



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Sri Lanka



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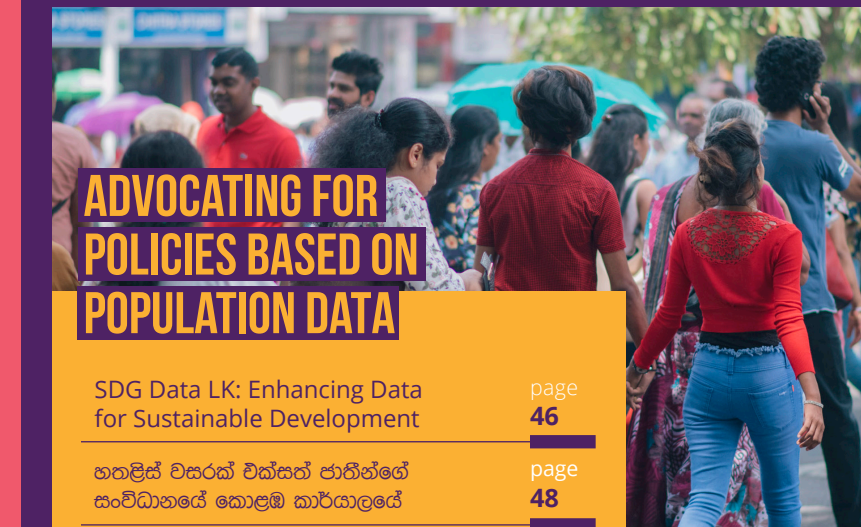
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The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is the United Nations Sexual and Reproductive Health Agency.

Delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

ABOUT US

In Sri Lanka we deliver this mandate based on principles of human rights and gender equality by advocating for rights-based gender responsive and transformative policies that enable the full realization of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.

Improving sexual and reproductive health and rights is our key priority.



» When women and girls live a life free from violence, they can fully realize and exercise their sexual and reproductive health and rights



» When young people have access to accurate information and services on sexual and reproductive health, they can make informed decisions about their bodies and lives



» When population dynamics, shaped by people's sexual and reproductive health and choices, are used to inform policies, we can reach those furthest behind

UNFPA

REPRESENTATIVE'S

MESSAGE

The year 2018 marks the beginning of the 9th country programme cycle in Sri Lanka. As the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency, UNFPA strives to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

In 2018, UNFPA launched efforts to achieve three transformative results; ambitions that promise to change the world for every person. This includes ending unmet need for family planning, ending preventable maternal death and ending gender-based violence and harmful practices.

The 2030 agenda for sustainable development recognizes reproductive health and rights as integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. With a number of high-level engagements, 2018 has been a busy year for our office in taking this agenda forward.

As the lead UN agency driving data for strengthened policies and decision-making in Sri Lanka. UNFPA was part of the first National Symposium on Data for the Sustainable Development Goals – a joint partnership with the Government of Sri Lanka and the wider UN.

The year 2018 has also seen a number of innovative partnerships. We have engaged with young people to talk about topics such as menstruation, to break stigma and raise awareness on eco-friendly menstrual hygiene products. During the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, UNFPA globally focused its attention on sexual harassment in public transport in Sri Lanka. This campaign featured real stories of women and girls who have faced sexual harassment in public buses and trains in the country. With continuous discussion and engagement, we look forward to making this issue a national

priority where women and girls can take public transport without fear or intimidation.

This annual report shows how UNFPA, during 2018, has helped Sri Lankan youth, women and girls to make free and informed choices about their bodies and lives.

For nearly 50 years, UNFPA has been supporting the Government of Sri Lanka in ensuring reproductive health and rights

for all. When women and girls have access to accurate information and services on sexual and reproductive health, they can live a life free from violence and fully exercise their reproductive rights and choices.

We appreciate the support of all our partners, including the Government of Sri Lanka, development partners, Civil Society Organizations and our sister UN agencies in achieving this shared goal.



Ritsu Nacken
Representative, UNFPA Sri Lanka

Ms. Nacken, a Japanese national, has been in the UN system for over 15 years, holding positions in New York, Fiji, Italy, Ethiopia, and Viet Nam prior to joining UNFPA Sri Lanka in February 2017.



PROTECTING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SRI LANKA



Violence against women and girls is one of the most prevalent human-rights violations in the world. When women and girls experience violence, it can affect their sexual and reproductive health choices as well as their educational, economic and political empowerment.

UNFPA is a co-chair of the National Forum against Gender-based Violence and works with a range of partners

including the Government of Sri Lanka and the private sector to, **strengthen public institutions and national policies** to prevent and address sexual and gender-based violence.



1 IN 3

Women worldwide have faced either **physical or sexual violence**

UNNATURAL DEATHS OF WOMEN & GIRLS: THE FIRST STUDY OF ITS KIND IN SRI LANKA



EVIDENCE-BASED DATA FOR STRENGTHENED POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

1 IN 3

FEMALE HOMICIDES IN SRI LANKA ARE RELATED TO INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE.



Unnatural Deaths of Women and Girls: <https://bit.ly/2rzNpYM>

Reportage of Unnatural Deaths of Women and Girls in Sri Lankan Newspapers: <https://bit.ly/2Eh9S49>

UNFPA and the University of Kelaniya launched a policy brief to understand the contributory factors of 'unnatural deaths' in five provinces in the country.

OUT OF THE 243 HOMICIDES REVIEWED IN THE STUDY, **128** OF THE CASES IDENTIFIED THE PERPETRATOR AS THE LEGAL HUSBAND.

At the end of the 3-year study, it was also found that

ONLY 30% OF THE HOMICIDE CASES HAD REACHED THE HIGH COURT;

while the average time period for conclusion of cases is 3 years from the time a case is filed.

In light of this, the study aims to describe and provide policy inputs to address problems associated with the judicial processes and outcomes relating to unnatural female deaths.

WHAT IS AN 'UNNATURAL DEATH?': AN UNNATURAL DEATH OCCURS AS A RESULT OF EXTERNAL CAUSES SUCH AS INJURY, TRAUMA OR POISONING WHERE THE MANNER OR CIRCUMSTANCE COULD BE HOMICIDAL, SUICIDAL OR ACCIDENTAL, OR AT TIMES EVEN NOT DETERMINED.

In addition, UNFPA also presented a policy brief on the 'Reportage of Unnatural Deaths of Women and Girls in Sri Lankan Newspapers'. The policy brief explored ways in which media reportage of the issue breach ethical guidelines on reporting; further highlighting the importance of sensitive and responsible reportage by the media.

CANADA GRANTS CDN \$900,000 TO UNFPA



The grant provided by Canada to UNFPA Sri Lanka will support in addressing sexual and gender-based violence through public institutions. This grant to UNFPA is part of Canada's CDN\$650 million comprehensive approach to address gaps in funding sexual and reproductive health and rights globally, and is a continuation of Canadian support

in Sri Lanka for women's empowerment, political participation, and ending gender-based violence in line with their Feminist International Assistance Policy.

UNFPA & BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION ADDRESSING SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The British High Commission of Colombo joins hands with UNFPA to support in delivering 'essential services' for victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. The 1 year project is valued at GBP 25,000.



COLLABORATIVE ACTION TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SRI LANKA



UNFPA together with the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs and the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka, inaugurated a two-day workshop, on multi-sectoral services responding to women and girls subject to violence.

When essential services are well-coordinated, quality assured and confidential, women and girls who have experienced violence can get the support they need to recover from its effects, break the cycle of violence and strengthen prevention measures.

The workshop provided stakeholders an opportunity to adopt a collaborative and multi-sectoral approach in providing these essential services. In guiding this effort, the 'Essential Services Package for Women and Girls subject to Violence' was introduced at the workshop.

Over 200 participants, representing a wide cross section of agencies including Government ministries and

departments, frontline service providers, UN agencies, CSOs and NGOs, actively engaged in the workshop featuring local and international resource personnel.



Essential Services Package
for Women and Girls
subject to Violence:
<https://bit.ly/2BdnTNa>



WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

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In 2017, the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka provided a grant to UNFPA for the delivery of the project, 'Addressing Sexual and Gender-based Violence through Public Institutions'. Public Sector Officials are key in ensuring that all women and girls subject to violence, receive the care, support and justice they are entitled to, as citizens of Sri Lanka.

As part of the project, UNFPA together with the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka, the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs and the Human Rights Commission, conducted a series of workshops for public sector officials on women's rights, sexual and gender based violence and reproductive health.

The workshops, titled 'Women's Rights are Human Rights' were conducted in Ampara, Anuradhapura, Vavuniya and Colombo for 85 national and sub national officers from the Human Rights Commission, Legal Aid Commission and Public Services Commission. The workshops focused on how public sector officials can better incorporate principles of gender equality in their work.

Participants have begun conducting their own knowledge sharing sessions ensuring that the messages and insights gained through these workshops does not stop at its culmination, but contributes to a movement in the way public sector officials approach their work.





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International Women's Day
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International Women's Day
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International Women's Day
 1938

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International Women's Day
 1938

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 Ministry of Women & Child Affairs

**CELEBRATING
 INTERNATIONAL
 WOMEN'S DAY**

At the National Women's Day walk, UNFPA walked in unison with over 1,000 people, commemorating strong women such as Late Una McCauley - the first female Resident Coordinator at the United Nations in Sri Lanka.

FILM SCREENING: ANATOMY OF VIOLENCE

UNFPA in Sri Lanka together with the High Commission of Canada to Sri Lanka and the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies (BCIS) co-hosted a film screening of 'Anatomy of Violence' - a Canadian drama that explores the root causes leading up to the 2012 gang rape incident in Delhi. The film screening was followed by a panel discussion with academy award nominated Director Deepa Mehta and theatre artist, Dr. Neelam Chowdhry.

- The film was also screened at the Jaffna Film Festival with support from the
- High Commission of Canada to increase awareness about gender-based violence.

 <https://bit.ly/2YDMDsO>

STRENGTHENING GENDER FOCUSED CORPORATE CULTURE AT MAS HOLDINGS

In 2017, UNFPA signed an MOU with MAS Holdings to deliver a one-year project to shift corporate culture within the organization by increasing awareness among employees on gender-equitable structures.

The project was successfully completed in 2018, reaching out to over 20,000 employees in five of MAS' apparel

manufacturing plants: Leisureline, Slimline, Bodyline, Linea Aqua, and Silueta.

The programme centralized around developing resource material and training of trainers to conduct awareness-raising sessions on gender-based violence and on the principles of gender-equality within the organization.

At the end of the one-year project, UNFPA had trained 22 MAS officers. These officers are now in-house resource personnel that have the knowledge, skills and tools to conduct sessions for more employees, thereby increasing awareness on gender-based violence and gender-equality. The project was designed as a sustainable model to ensure that

while UNFPA technical support phases out, MAS can continue to train its employees through the in-house resource personnel, thereby scaling up the programme to reach all employees and promote equitable structures within the organization.

 <https://bit.ly/2I5i7Ce>

ANATOMY
OF VIOLENCE

A HAMILTON-MEHTA PRODUCTION "ANATOMY OF VIOLENCE"
DIRECTED BY DEEPA MEHTA
CASTING BY JANKI BIKSHI
COSTUME DESIGNER MANISH BHARDWAJ
CINEMATOGRAPHER CHANDER SINGH
EDITORS JAGJEET SANGHOI
MUSIC BY RAJESH DAS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SUJAN JHA, MAHESH SAHNI
PRODUCED BY RAHMANUJI CAJUR, ZOHANUJI SHUKLA, DEEPA MEHTA
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS TIA BHATTI, SHEEMA BISHNOI
PRODUCED BY NEELAM MANJESHWAR CHOWDHRY, DEEPA MEHTA
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MATTHEW VENKATARAMAN, DABBY MANNING
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS THE GOLLING PICTURE COMPANY
PRODUCED BY SARAJ PRASITTOONKAR
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS DRAMEE KONDAB, HIRSHIPRAKASH, BRANDON TIGGA
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS TATTERSALL SOUND & PICTURE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS DAVID HAMILTON
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS DEEPA MEHTA

JAYANTHI: PROTECTING WOMEN, FIGHTING INEQUALITIES



During a woman's lifetime, as a girl, as a woman, as a wife, as a mother, she is faced with many challenges solely because of her gender.



Jayanthi is from Homagama, Sri Lanka. She has over 10 years of experience working as a counsellor.

These are the insightful words of Jayanthi, a professional counsellor at Sri Lanka's leading apparel company, MAS Holdings.

In Sri Lanka, and in many parts of the world, gender plays a major role in how we are expected to think and behave.



If you are a woman, there is a perception that a woman's life choices should be dictated by her male counterparts. This kind of thinking is largely influenced by our culture and society.

Key issues

Gender stereotypes can result in many inequalities. Jayanthi identifies that these inequalities can perpetuate a culture of violence.



The root cause of violence against women and girls is gender inequality.

According to a study commissioned by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 1 in 3 female homicides in Sri Lanka are a result of intimate partner violence. The Demographic and Health



Survey (2016), highlights that among women who suffered from domestic violence, only one fourth have sought help. This shows that violence against women and girls is shrouded in a culture of silence.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world. It undermines the health, dignity and autonomy of its victims. As a counsellor, Jayanthi explains, "our past experiences play an important

role in how we react to situations as an adult. Violence against women and girls can influence generations". For example, when children are exposed to violence between their parents; because of learned behavior, women and girls tend to accept violence as an inevitable part of life.

This has damaging consequences because victims of violence can suffer sexual and reproductive health consequences,

including forced and unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, and even death. The Demographic and Health Survey (2016) shows that domestic violence during pregnancy is a common occurrence in Sri Lanka, which can lead to miscarriages, stillbirths and maternal deaths. There are many stories like this in Sri Lanka, and this is only a glimpse into the scale of the problem of violence against women and girls.

Taking action

With over 95,000 employees, MAS Holdings is the largest private-sector employer of women in Sri Lanka. Recognizing the need to uplift and protect the lives of their female workers, in line with International Women's Day (2017); MAS Holdings partnered with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Sri Lanka to deliver a one-year project to shift corporate culture within the organization by increasing awareness among employees on gender-equitable structures.



Jayanthi and her colleague taking part in forum theatre to highlight gender stereotypes

UNFPA being one of the leading agencies within the UN system to address and prevent gender-based violence, made a customized programme centralized around developing resource material and training of trainers to conduct awareness raising sessions on gender-based violence and on gender-equality within the organization.

Empowering women and girls

After the one-year programme, UNFPA had reached out to more than 20,000 employees of MAS Holdings to ensure its employees and their families live with respect and dignity.

As an active participant in the programme, Jayanthi adds that she and her colleagues learnt more about the legal frameworks protecting women and girls experiencing violence; which they were not previously aware of.



Because of this programme conducted by UNFPA, more women and girls come in for consultations. Some think they deserve to go through such experiences. But now they feel more empowered to speak up, because they know their rights and they know they don't have to face these problems alone.

Hope for the future

Looking back, Jayanthi realizes how things are gradually changing with time.



We now live in a very competitive society. Women contribute equally to the economy as men do. We cannot disregard the value and potential of women. We have to reconsider the role of women as active citizens and strive to create a free and safe environment

for women and girls. At MAS, we do this by training our team leads with basic counselling skills; they then speak to their team members and encourage them to go for counselling if they are facing any problems at work or in their personal life.

Speaking of her family, Jayanthi raises a very important point:



Addressing gender inequalities starts with your family. I am a mother of one daughter and I am lucky to have a husband that supports me. After this programme, I went home and spoke about this issue with them. Before, I used to be very protective of my daughter, especially because of the stories I hear. Now, I have realized that I have to give her the freedom and the same opportunities that I would if I had a son. This programme has helped my personal life in many ways. It has helped me realize that I should let my daughter live

and experience life without any limitations, and it is my responsibility to teach her about the importance of gender-equality; that men and women should be treated equally, and women and girls should not be discriminated based on their gender. Only then would she be empowered to expand her choices in life and reach her fullest potential.



UNFPA was part of 'HackaDev': The National Youth Social Innovation Challenge: a joint initiative between the Ministry of Telecommunication, Digital Infrastructure and Foreign Employment (MTDIFE) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Sri Lanka.

For the HackaDev, UNFPA presented a thematic challenge where teams

MAKING PUBLIC TRANSPORT SAFER FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

of young people pitched their ideas and solutions under the topic of 'sexual harassment in public transport'.

At the 5-day social innovation camp, UNFPA mentored the teams to ideate and fine-tune their solutions towards addressing sexual harassment in public transport in Sri Lanka.

Team 'Tech Ruhuna' had the winning solution to which the team will receive seed funding and technical support from UNFPA to implement their projects.

#HackaDev

ENGAGING MEDIA TO ADDRESS SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

UNFPA conducted a media workshop for Sinhala media personnel on making public transport safer for women and girls in Sri Lanka. The workshop engaged local media to foster public discussions and advocate for strengthened response mechanisms on sexual harassment in public transport.

Leading up to the workshop, an invisible theater act was performed inside a travelling bus, engaging over 50 journalists, and giving them an experiential perspective of the issue. The performance showcased many different forms of harassment faced by women and girls in public transport.



90% of women and girls have faced sexual harassment in public transport according to a study done by UNFPA



ORANGE THE WORLD: 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Every year, iconic buildings around the world are illuminated in orange during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence, a global campaign that starts from 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) to 10 December (Human Rights Day). Throughout the 16 days, Governments, UN agencies, civil society, and activists come together to raise awareness on this issue that knows no social, economic, or national boundaries.

More than a third of women worldwide have experienced either physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives.

In Sri Lanka, with support from the Colombo Municipal Council, the Town Hall building was lit up in bright orange for 16 days, urging the need to foster a safer environment for women and girls.

 #16Days

DON'T LOOK AWAY: 16 DAYS. 16 STORIES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

This year, to mark the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, UNFPA rolled out a global campaign highlighting the issue of sexual harassment in public transport in Sri Lanka. As part of the online campaign, UNFPA teamed up with Eliza Hatch of Cheer Up Luv: a photojournalism series that tells women's stories of sexual harassment in their own words, to amplify the voices of those unheard. The advocacy campaign titled 'Don't Look Away' featured stories of women and girls who have endured sexual harassment in public transport in Sri Lanka.

The global campaign reached over 6 million people from around the world, making it one of UNFPA's most widespread campaigns.

To take the campaign further, UNFPA branded a bus stop in Colombo urging victims and bystanders to **intervene, speak up** and **be the change** against sexual harassment in public transport.

During the 16 days, an activation was also carried out in bus stops and the Fort railway station reaching out to conductors, bus drivers and passengers highlighting the importance of speaking up against sexual harassment in public transport.

Read the stories:
unfpa.org/16days

“

One day, I was travelling home from school with my younger brother and I was in my school uniform. A man was sitting behind me in the bus and he tapped me. When he tapped me, I turned around and looked at him. As soon as I looked at him, he inappropriately exposed a private part of his body. To be honest, I was very young and I cried a lot and walked to the front of the bus. An uncle saw that I was crying and asked me why. When I told him what happened, he asked another passenger who was getting off at the same place to take us home safely. Then that person dropped us home. I got really scared at the time. Since I was really young, I was not sure how to react. I am sharing my experience now, because then hopefully other girls can be vigilant and aware when travelling in public transport. Sri Lanka is a country where many people use public transport. I hope people can understand how they must use public transport when they hear my experience, and I hope the relevant authorities will take necessary action to address this issue when they hear my story.

“

එක දවසක් මා මගේ මල්ලි එක්ක බසයේ ගමන් කරමින් හිටියා. මා හිටියේ පාසල් නිල ඇඳුමෙන්. මගේ පිටිපස්සෙන් සිටි මිනිසෙකු මට තට්ටු කළා. මා හැරී බලන විට ඔහු තම රහස් අවයව මට පෙන්වුවා. එතකොට මම ගොඩක් පොඩි ප්‍රමයෙක්. මම අඬන්න පටන් ගත්තා. අඬ අඬා ම මම බසයේ ඉස්සරහට ගියා. මා අඬනවා දුටු අංකල් කෙනෙකු මගෙන් හේතුව ඇහුවා. මම ඔහුට මට වූ දේ කීවීවා. මා ඔහු තැනින් ඔහු වෙනත් මගියකු ඇමතු ඔහු මා පරිස්සමෙන් ගෙදර එක්කගෙන යන්නැයි කීවීවා. ඔහු මාවත්, මගේ මල්ලිවත් ගෙදර එක්කගෙන ගියා. ඒ කාලෙ මා පොඩි නිසා මා බය වුණා. ප්‍රතිචාර දක්වන්නෙ කොහොමද කියා දැනගෙන හිටියෙ නැහැ. මා දැන් මගේ අත්දැකීම් බෙදාගන්නෙ ඒ වගේ ගැහැණු ප්‍රමයිනට පොදු ප්‍රවාහනය භාවිතා කරද්දී පරිස්සම් වීම සඳහා පණිවුඩයක් දෙන්නටයි. මගේ කතාව අනලා අදාළ බලධාරීන් මේ ප්‍රශ්නය විසඳන්නට අවශ්‍ය පියවර ගනියි කියා මා බලාපොරොත්තු වෙනවා.

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ඉරුනාන් නානුම ඉන් තම්පියුම් පාලසාලාලා ජීරුදායියිල් පස්සියිල් වීරු තීරුම්පිකකොණ්ඩරුන්තොම්. අප්පොතු අනෙකුට්පින්නාල් අමර්න්තිරුන්ත මනිතර් අන්නෙ තද්දිනාර්. උදනෙ නාන් තීරුම්පිපාර්ත්තේන්. නාන් තීරුම්පියතුමෙ අවර් තන්නුදාය අන්තරාංක පතූතියෙ අනෙකු කාණ්පිත්තාර්. නාන් පෙරිතාක අඹ ඉරුම්පිත්තේන්. අඹුතප්පි පස්සියිල් මුණ්පතූතියෙ නොකකි තකර්න්තේන්. ඉරු පෙරියවර් නාන් අඹුච්චෙත්පාර්ත්තාච්චි ඉන්න තද්දිනතු ඉන්නු විසාරිත්තාර්. නානුම් තද්දිනතෙ සොන්නේන්. පීරුතු අවර් ඉන්නෙදුම් තම්පියදුම් ඉඹ්කල් පස් තරිප්පිද්දිල් ඉරුඹ්කිය ඉරු පයනියිද්දිල් පාතූකාප්පාක වීද්දිල් විරුමාඹු වෙණ්දිකකොණ්ඩාර්. අචරුම් ඉඹ්කලෙ වීද්දිල් විරුප් සෙන්නාර්. අන්ත තේරුත්තීල් නාන් මිකචුම් පයන්තු පොයිරුන්තේන්. අප්පොතු මිකචුම් සීරුයච්චෙකාක ඉරුන්ත පද්දියිනාල් පතීලුකු අප්පදි තද්දිනතු කොච්චතු ඉන්තේ අනෙකුත් තේරුයච්චෙලා. පස්සියිල් පයනම් සෙද්දුම් පීරු පෙණ්කල් පාතූකාප්පද්දිලුම් විරුප්පුණර්චුද්දිලුම් පයනම් සෙද්දියච්චෙණ්දුම් ඉන්පතර්කාකච්චෙ ඉප්පොතු ඉන් අනුපච්චෙතෙ පකීර්කීරේන්. ඉලඹ්කෙයියිල් පෙරුම්පාණ්මෙයාණ මකකල් පොතූප්පොකුච්චෙතෙ උද්දොකිකකීරුන්තේන්. ඉන්නුදාය අනුපච්චෙතෙ කේදුම් පොතු පොතූමකකල් තාඹ්කල් ඉච්චාඹු විරුප්පද්දිලුම් ඉරුකකච්චෙණ්දුම් ඉන්නු උණර්ච්චෙතොදු උරිය අතිකාරිකලුම් ඉප්පිර්ච්චෙතෙකු තීරුචු කාණ්පාර්කල් ඉන්නු නාන් තද්දිකීරේන්.



பேருந்து ஓட்டுனராக ஆரம்பித்து பிரதேச சபை உறுப்பினர் வரை: திருமதி. அஞ்சலா கோகிலக்குமாரின் கதை

காலை 6.30 மணியளவில் வவுனியா-கிடாச்சரி பாதையில் பஸ்ஸுக்காக காத்துக்கொண்டிருந்திருப்பீர்களானால் நீங்களும் அஞ்சலாவை சந்தித்திருக்கக்கூடும். தினமும் தவறாது அந்த பாதையில் வண்டியோட்டி வந்த அஞ்சலாவுக்கு வயது இப்போது 36. 2007 ஆம் ஆண்டில் இருந்து கிட்டத்தட்ட பதினொரு வருடங்களாக ஒருநாளைக்கு மூன்று முறை பேருந்தை ஓட்டியிருக்கிறார் அஞ்சலா.

“ஆரம்பத்தில் ஏற்ப்பயப்பட்டு என் பஸ்ஸை தவிர்த்தவர்களையும் என் பஸ்ஸுக்காக காத்திருக்க வைத்தது தான் என் சாதனை” என்கிறார் அஞ்சலா பெரிய புன்னகையுடன்.

ஆனால் பஸ் ஓட்டுவது அனேகமாக பெண்கள் செய்யாததொரு வேலை. பொதுவாகவே எம் சமூகத்தில் மக்கள் பெண் ஓட்டுனர்களை நம்புவதில்லை. அது தான் முதலில் அஞ்சலாவை பஸ்ஸில் கண்டதும் மக்கள் தயங்கினார்கள். அவர் பொறுமையாகவும், பாதுகாப்பாகவும் வண்டியோட்டி தன்னை நிரூபித்ததும் அவர்களுக்கு அஞ்சலாவின் வண்டியில் பயணிக்க எந்த தடையும் இருக்கவில்லை. பெண் ஒருத்தி இருக்குமிடம் ஆண்கள் இருப்பதை விட வேறானது. பெண்கள் இலகுவாக பழகி நட்புணர்வை ஏற்படுத்தி விடுவார்கள். அலுவலகத்துக்கு செல்லும் பெண்களை ஓட்டுனர் ஆசனத்தில் இருந்து ஒரு பெண் நலம் விசாரிப்பதும், பயணத்தின் போது பெண்கள் கூட தயக்கமின்றி உரையாட முடிவதும், அதைவிட

பெண்கள் மிகவும் பாதுகாப்பாக உணர்வதும் அவரது பஸ்ஸை மக்கள் விரும்ப காரணமாக இருக்கலாம் என்பது அஞ்சலாவின் கருத்து.

அஞ்சலா பஸ் ஓட்டுனரானது ஒரு சுவாரஸ்யமான கதை. திருமணத்தின் பின் வீட்டில் பிள்ளைகளை கவனித்துக்கொண்டிருந்த அஞ்சலாவின் கணவர் 4-5 பஸ்களை வைத்து நிர்வகித்திருக்கிறார். இடப்பெயர்வு பிரச்சனை காரணமாக அவர் வெளிநாடு செல்ல நினைத்ததும் தமக்கு பதிலாக நிர்வகிக்க மனைவியை தயார் செய்திருக்கிறார்.

சொந்தமாக உங்களுக்கு ஓட்டத் தெரியாவிட்டால் உங்களால் இத்தனை பஸ்களை வைத்து நிர்வகிக்க முடியாது. குறைந்த பட்சம் ஒரு ஓட்டுனர் உரிமம் ஆவது வைத்திருக்க வேண்டும் என்ற அவரின் தூண்டுகோலுக்கு முதலில் தயங்கினாலும் அஞ்சலாவும் உடன் பட்டு விட்டார். ஓட்டுனர் உரிமமும் கிடைத்தது. ஒரு நாள் அவர்களுடைய ஒரு பஸ்ஸை ஓட்ட வேண்டிய ஓட்டுனர் வரவில்லை, அது கட்டாயமாக செல்ல

வேண்டிய ஒரு பயணம். ஆகவே ஓட்டுனர் உரிமம் வைத்திருந்த அஞ்சலாவை அப்பொறுப்பு வந்தடைந்தது. இது தான் அஞ்சலாவின் முதல் பஸ் பயணம் ஒரு ஓட்டுனராக. பேருந்து ஓட்டும் போது கிடைத்த தன்னம்பிக்கையும் சுதந்திர உணர்வும் அஞ்சலாவுக்கும் பிடித்துப்போனதில் அவரது பயணம் 11 வருடங்களாக தொடர்ந்தது.

அஞ்சலாவுக்கு ஒரு மகனும் மகளுமாய் 2 பிள்ளைகள் இருக்கிறார்கள். பெண்கள் சரி சமமாக சந்தர்ப்பங்களை பெற்று பயன்படுத்த வேண்டும் என்பது கணவர் மனைவி இருவரினதும் உறுதியான நம்பிக்கையாகும். அஞ்சலாவின் பஸ்ஸில் அவரது கணவர் செல்வக்குமார் தான் அனேகமாக அஞ்சலாவின் பஸ்ஸில் டிக்கட் சேகரிப்பவராக வருவார் என்பதனால் எனக்கு இரட்டிப்பு பலம் என்று சிரிக்கிறார் அஞ்சலா.

இப்படியே போய்க்கொண்டிருந்த அவரது பயணத்தில் கடந்த வருட தேர்தல் ஒரு மாற்றத்தை ஏற்படுத்தியது. 25% இட ஒதுக்கீடு பெண்களுக்கு ஒதுக்கப்பட வேண்டும் என்ற காரணத்தால் கட்சிகள் மக்களுக்கு அறிமுகமான சமூகத்துக்காக உழைக்கக்கூடிய பெண் முகங்களை தேடிய போது

தமிழ் கட்சி ஒன்று அஞ்சலாவையும் அணுகியது. மீண்டும் அவரது கணவர் உற்சாகப்படுத்த சிறிது தயங்கினாலும் உற்சாகமாகவே தேர்தலில் கலந்து கொண்டார் அஞ்சலா. “கட்சி பேதமில்லாமல் நான் உங்களுக்கு நன்றாகத் தெரிந்தவன், உங்களை சேர்ந்தவன், நம் பிரச்சனைகளை ஒன்றாக இணைந்து நாம் தீர்ப்போம் என்று கூறித்தான் நான் வாக்குக்கேட்டேன். மக்கள் நம்பி வாக்களித்தார்கள். அதனால் நான் இப்போது ஓமந்தை தணிச்சர் புளியங்குளம் பகுதியின் பிரதேச சபை உறுப்பினர்” என்றார் அவர்.

இப்போதைக்கு என் நோக்கமெல்லாம் எங்கள் பகுதியின் முன்னேற்றத்துக்கு என்ன செய்யமுடியுமோ அவ்வளவையும் செய்வது தான். இப்போது நான் பஸ் ஓடுவதில்லை. இப்போது முதற்கட்டமாக எங்கள் பகுதியின் 26 கிராமங்களில் வீதி விளக்குகளை பொருத்தும் வேலையில் ஈடுபட்டிருக்கிறோம். சின்ன மாற்றங்களே ஆயினும், சமுதாய அபிவிருத்திக்கு எங்களால் முடிந்ததை செய்ய வேண்டும் என்று சொன்ன அஞ்சலாவின் குரலில் அத்தனை உறுதி!

BY USHANTHY GOWTHAMAN
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ENSURING ACCESS TO SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

50%

of youth in Sri Lanka have limited knowledge about the reproductive organs of the opposite sex

Source: National Youth Health Survey, 2013

More than half of young people in Sri Lanka lack the knowledge required to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. The sexual and reproductive choices of young people can have a cascading effect on their human rights. Adolescent

pregnancy for example can lead girls to drop out of school, which prevents girls from exercising their right to education, and poor understanding of gender equality can lead to discrimination and coercion.

As the UN's sexual and reproductive health agency, UNFPA supports the Government of Sri Lanka and works with a range of local and international partners to ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights remain at the core of

the Population and Development Agenda.

THE PATH TO SUSTAINABILITY

Improving sexual and reproductive health and rights is a key effort towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

In the recent past, myths and misconceptions around family planning has triggered communal violence in the country.

There exists a clear need to move away from traditional views of family planning as 'population control'. Family planning is the means to allow individuals to exercise their rights and expand their choices to freely decide, if, when and how often to have children. This includes access to information, education and the means to do so.

UNFPA's efforts enable individuals, including young people in Sri Lanka, to develop these skills and acquire the knowledge and support needed to make informed decisions about their bodies and lives; as a result, reaching new milestones which are significantly making changes in the policy landscape of the country.



SRI LANKA JOINS



In 2018, Sri Lanka joined the global movement, FP2020 to address the most challenging barriers to expanding access to family planning in the country. FP2020 is based on the principle that all women should have access to lifesaving contraceptives. Sri Lanka's objective is to increase the percentage of eligible families, who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods of contraceptives from 74.2% to 79% by 2025, with a focus on reducing regional disparities.

UNFPA is a key partner in the FP2020 global partnership to empower women and girls by investing in rights-based family planning that continuously advocates and works closely with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that the country progresses towards the FP2020 commitments.

As a result of using modern methods of contraception, over 1 million unplanned pregnancies in Sri Lanka have been prevented and 403,000 unsafe abortions have been averted

Source: FP2020 Annual Progress Report 2018

LOVE & PEACE: EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION

UNFPA AT YOWUNPURAYA

UNFPA together with UN in Sri Lanka participated in Yowunpuraya: 'City of Youth' - a 5 day residential youth festival organized by the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs, the National Youth Services Council, and Sri Lanka Youth.

At Yowunpuraya, UNFPA reached out to more than 5,000 young people across the island. Highlighting the importance of love and peace, UNFPA conducted awareness sessions on sexual and reproductive health to equip young people with scientifically accurate information about human development, anatomy, and reproductive health, as well as information about contraception, childbirth and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), such as HIV/AIDS.



UNFPA AT THE INTER-UNIVERSITY GENDER FESTIVAL

UNFPA was happy to be a part of the inter-university gender festival - 'Journey towards gender equity and gender equality' conducted by the University Grants Commission. The three-day festival held at University of Kelaniya brought together over 100 youth from universities across Sri Lanka.

UNFPA supported the festival through its own stall 'Love and Peace' which had a 'Love Cinema' to raise awareness on the importance of comprehensive sexuality education among youth. Students also had the opportunity to complete 'Road to Adulthood' - A trilingual e-course for young people to learn about reproductive health and rights. UNFPA also highlighted the importance of inclusive sexuality education, especially among young people with disabilities through the 'ABLE APP'. The App creates a space for differently abled individuals to obtain information on sexual and reproductive health, considering that there are over 1 million people in Sri Lanka who are differently abled, most being visually impaired.



YOUth4YOUTH A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



The recent incidents of communal violence that took place in 2018, particularly in relation to incidents that stemmed from inaccurate information relating to reproductive health, called for action to create a safer space and safer Sri Lanka for all Sri Lankans, including young people.

UNFPA's 3-year programme 'Youth4Youth' created safe spaces for Sri Lankan youth in the Northern, Eastern, Central and Southern Provinces to engage in meaningful discussions around youth participation in community development.

Through the Youth4Youth programme, a National symposium was held with over 100 young people from diverse backgrounds to connect ideas and build communities to nurture lasting peace in Sri Lanka.

“If everyone unites and identifies themselves as Sri Lankans irrespective of their race and religion, it is not difficult to achieve peace in our country.”

Indunil, Southern Province, Sri Lanka

“The concept of peace should come from our hearts and minds. If all young people commit to work together then we can achieve sustained peace.”

Nithushaan, Northern Province, Sri Lanka.

Active youth participation and increased access to accurate information is essential for peaceful and inclusive societies.

The Youth4Youth programme is delivered by UNFPA in partnership with Chrysalis and UN Volunteers. The programme is supported by the UN Peacebuilding Fund.



ASHLEY JUDD ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

In 2018, Award-winning Hollywood actress, writer, and UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador, Ashley Judd, arrived in Sri Lanka. During her mission, Ashley Judd engaged with women and girls, and stakeholders from the public sector, private sector and donor community to discuss the importance of investing in reproductive health and rights.



“It’s so important that women talk to one another, because that’s where we get so much of our information. We girls have to group up and talk about our sexual and reproductive health.”

Ashley Judd also visited the De Soysa Maternity Hospital, where she engaged with pregnant mothers and newborn babies, and learned more about UNFPA’s support in formalizing maternal care guidelines

in the country. UNFPA has also supported the Family Health Bureau in the establishment of ‘Mithuru Piyasa’-

hospital-based care centers that provide counselling and immediate care for victims of Gender-based Violence (GBV).

In light of UNFPA’s partnership with MAS Holdings, Ashley visited MAS Holding’s UNICHELA garment factory in Panadura. Speaking to empowered women at the factory, she learned how the apparel industry has been a catalyst in enhancing livelihoods of women, their families, communities, and the country as a whole.

Ashley also met with female members of the local film community to share views on how film can be used as a tool to increase awareness on issues relating to GBV, the importance of reproductive health and rights, and sexuality education.

“The students were talking about GBV in a non-shaming way that was very safe and really open, and it’s that kind of awareness that creates advocacy and courage. This is what the world needs now.”



EMBRACING DIVERSITY AND PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

On International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, the UN in Sri Lanka supports the full human rights of all members of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities in Sri Lanka.

THE MONTAGE OF SEXUALITY

Sexuality is an intrinsic part of life and connotes the totality of a human being. Unlike the word 'sex' that represents a physiologic act or the categorizations into which human beings are often boxed into; sexuality denotes the most intimate feelings and deepest longings of humans to find sexual expression and meaningful relationships with others and often with their own identities.

The Montage of Sexuality was published by UNFPA and the College of Community Physicians to create a positive dialogue around sexuality in Sri Lanka.



The Montage of Sexuality:
<https://bit.ly/2K0WnX2>

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MENOPAUSE

For ageing women, menopause is a significant transition from both a biological and social perspective. Hormonal changes occurring during the menopausal period may lead to adverse effects on the quality of life. The menopause flipchart developed by UNFPA and the Menopause Society of Sri Lanka provides information on effectively managing menopause for a happier and healthy life.



Menopause Flipchart:
<https://bit.ly/2CcxvJj>

WORLD AIDS DAY: KNOW YOUR STATUS

On World AIDS Day, UNFPA walked with over 3000 Sri Lankans to raise awareness about HIV testing.



GENERATION-TO-GENERATION DIALOGUE ON COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION

On World Population Day, UNFPA together with the Parliamentary Sectoral Oversight Committee on Women and Gender, and the Ministry of Education hosted UNFPA's 5th Generation-to-Generation (G2G) dialogue highlighting the need for Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in Sri Lanka.

The G2G facilitated a discussion on how different stakeholders, with a special emphasis on policymakers and

young people can come together to address gaps in comprehensive sexuality education in Sri Lanka, through targeted initiatives and inclusive policies.

Over 180 people attended, including

government officials, members from civil society as well as young students.

UNFPA is continuing to support the Government of Sri Lanka and other stakeholders to ensure that the agenda to implement Comprehensive Sexuality Education is taken forward in the country.



#G2G



The need for Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Sri Lanka:
<https://bit.ly/2UmkdV9>

BREAKING THE STIGMA ON MENSTRUATION

To mark Menstrual Hygiene Day in Sri Lanka, UNFPA ran a quiz competition on social media where winners received passes to watch the Bollywood film 'Pad Man' at a special screening.

'Pad Man' is a film based on the inspiring life story of Arunchalam Muruganatham, an Indian man who revolutionized the concept of menstrual hygiene by manufacturing low-cost sanitary napkins in India, upon learning that his wife used filthy rags and newspapers during her period. The film explores

many important aspects such as gender stereotypes and challenges the social stigma around menstruation.

At the screening, over 100 young people also had the opportunity to learn about three eco-friendly menstrual hygienic products: 1) Candra - a reusable undergarment manufactured by Sri Lankan apparel company Hela Clothing, 2) Me Luna - Menstrual Cups produced in Germany, and 3) Momiji Natural - a reusable cloth-based sanitary napkin locally produced by a female Japanese entrepreneur.



Men should know about menstruation too!



#NoMoreLimits
#MHDay

UNFPA & WFP JOIN HANDS TO ADDRESS REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH NEEDS OF WOMEN

UNFPA and the World Food Programme joined hands to deliver a project in close cooperation with the Ministry of Health. This unique partnership takes a holistic approach to the health and well-being of women and girls in Sri Lanka. The project which is funded by the Government of Denmark will assist communities in 6 districts - Monaragala, Matale, Mullaitivu, Mannar, Batticaloa, and Nuwara Eliya. It aspires to empower women and girls by providing comprehensive information and services on sexual and reproductive health, with a focus on nutrition.



Integrating nutrition into sexual and reproductive health can drive mutually reinforcing health outcomes for women and girls in Sri Lanka. By doing so, we can achieve healthier pregnancies and birth outcomes, end maternal deaths and reduce reproductive and maternal health risks.

35%
married women
are **not using**
contraception.

Teenage pregnancies
are at a rate of

4.8%
with subnational
disparities of 5-8%

Source: Demographic and Health Survey, 2016

VISIT TO THE CENTRAL PROVINCE



UNFPA Representative, Ritsu Nacken visited the Madolkele Divisional hospital in the Central Province with the Regional Director of Health services to speak about the challenges faced by pregnant mothers in the region.

'During her visit, she also met with teenage mothers who have endured sexual and gender-based violence at a shelter for survivors of gender-based violence.



ADVOCATING FOR POLICIES BASED ON POPULATION DATA

56%

of the total
aged population
in Sri Lanka are
females

Without accurate data, policymakers cannot be prepared to address challenges and harness opportunities of emerging population trends.

UNFPA is the lead UN agency driving data for strengthened policies

and decision-making within the UN system in Sri Lanka.

In order to ensure that no one is left behind, UNFPA plays a pivotal role in:

- Ensuring that demographic trends such as population ageing are highlighted at policy level to inform national and subnational decision making in Sri Lanka

- Providing technical support during all stages of a National census and helps ensure that data is widely utilized and disseminated for development
- Working with policymakers, civil society, healthcare providers and educators at all levels to promote

sexual and reproductive health and rights.

#SDGDataLK

ENHANCING DATA FOR A SUSTAINABLE SRI LANKA

UNFPA is the lead United Nations agency driving Data for strengthened policies and decision-making in Sri Lanka.

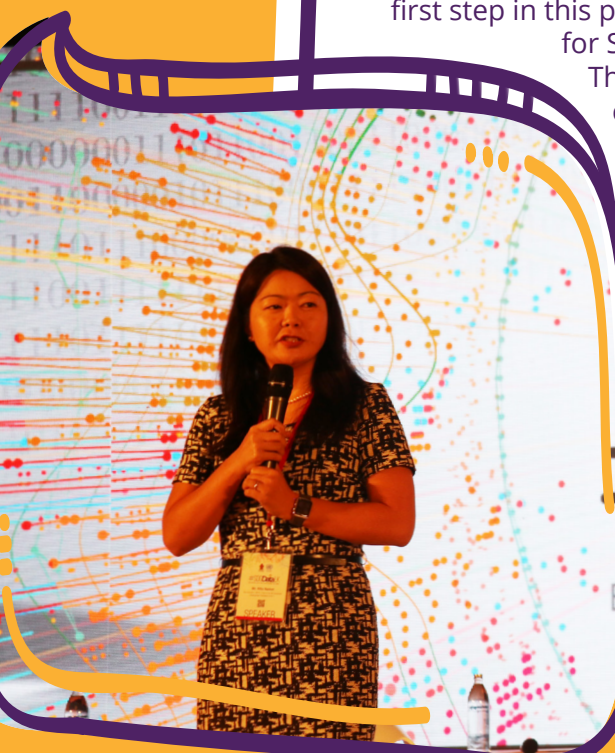
Recognizing the crucial role Data plays in Sri Lanka's journey towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Government of Sri Lanka and the United Nations, jointly organized '#SDGDataLK: Enhancing Data for a Sustainable Sri Lanka'- the First National Symposium on Data for the SDGs.

The symposium served as a National platform for enhancing the use of Data towards evidence-based policymaking and developing a sustainable Sri Lanka. The first step in this process is to establish the baseline Data for Sri Lanka, against the SDG indicators.

This helps to understand where Sri Lanka currently stands in our shared journey towards achieving the SDGs by 2030, and in driving policies based on evidence towards achieving the 169 SDG targets and 17 SDGs.

Over 300 participants joined the 2-day symposium, representing the Government, UN Agencies, Private Sector, Civil Society Organizations, Academia, and Data and Research Organizations.

<https://bit.ly/2RVIW2x>





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BY AJITH LIYANAGE
This article was originally published on
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විනානගේ ජයවර්ධන පෙරේරා හෙවත් ජයා. මායි ජයායි ගමන් රැසක් අපේ කාර්යාල වාහනේ ගිහින් තියෙනවා. වසර 2016දී සිදු වූ නාය යාම් හා ගංවතුරෙන් විපතට පත් වූවන්ට සහන සලසනු පිණිස එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ ජනගහණ අරමුදලේ අනුග්‍රාහකත්වයෙන්, පවුල් සංවිධාන සංගමයේ හා රතු කුරුස සංවිධානයේ දායකත්වයෙන් සබරගමුව පළාත් සෞඛ්‍ය අමාත්‍යාංශය විසින් රඹුක්කනදී පවත්වන ලද වෛද්‍ය සායනයක මාධ්‍ය ආවරණය කරන්නට ගිය ගමනකදී ඊළඟ දවසේ වචනි සායනයක් පවත්වන්නට නියමිතව තිබුණු චලනපිටියටත් ගියා නම් හොඳ බවයි මට සිතුවේ. චලනපිටිය කියන්නේ 2016දී අරණායක සාමසරකන්ද නාය යාම නිසා 100කට අධික මිනිසුන් මිය යද්දී පණ බේරා ගත් අය ජීවත් වූණ සරණාගත කඳවුරක්. "යමුද ජයා?"

ජයා ඕනෑ වෙලාවක ඕනෑ ගමනකට සූදානම්. රාමසරකන්ද පාමුල චලනපිටිය කඳවුරේදී ජයා හරි සංවේදීව කතා කළ හැටි මට මතකයි.

2007දී යුද්දෙ පටන් අරගෙන ස්වේච්ඡා සේවකයන් 17ක් අතුරුදහන් වූණ මුතුරු පැත්තේ සරණාගත කඳවුරු බලන්නට එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ ජනගහණ අරමුදලේ සහායක නියෝජිතවරියක සමග ගිහින් සවස පහමාරට විතර ආපසු එන්නට පිටත් වූ පසු වෙඩි හුවමාරුවකට මැදි වී යන්නමින් පණ බේරා ගත් හැටි ජයා ජීප් රිය පදවන ගමන් විස්තර කරනවා.

අතරමගදී පාසල් යන ළමයින් පිරිසකගෙන් ජයා පාර අහන්නේ "මල්ලි, කොහොමද අර නාය ගිය තැනට යන්නේ?" කියලායි. ජයා හදවතින් තරුණයි.

වසර 1955 ජූලි මස 4දා පිළියන්දල මධ්‍යතන දී උපන් ජයා 2017 ජූලි 31දා 62 වසරක් පිරි විශ්‍රාම ලබනවා. ඔහුගේ කතාව මෙහි ලියන්නට හේතු වූණ විශේෂ කාරණය තමයි, ජයා හතළිස් වසරක් ම එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ සංවිධානයේ සේවය කළ අයෙකු වීම.

"අටේ පන්තිය දක්වා ඉගෙන ගැනීමෙන් පසුව මා තාත්තාත් එක්ක කොළඹ ගියා. එහේදී තමයි 1976දී ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ පළමු ලෝක බැංකු ප්‍රධානී ඩේවිඩ් තෝමස් මහතාගේ පෞද්ගලික කාර්ය මණ්ඩලයේ සේවයට බැඳුණේ. එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ ජනගහණ අරමුදලේ පළමු ශ්‍රී ලංකා නියෝජිත මජීඩ් බාන් මහතාගේ යටතේ මා 1978 සිට වැඩ කළා. ඉන් පසු එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ තොරතුරු මධ්‍යස්ථානයේත්, එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ සංවර්ධන වැඩසටහනේත් මා සේවය කළා."

එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ ජනගහණ අරමුදලේ ශ්‍රී ලංකා නියෝජිතවරිය ලෙස සුනිතා මුඛර්ජි මහත්මිය සේවය කරන සමයේ ජයා ඒ සංවිධානයේ කාර්ය මණ්ඩලයට එකතු වුණා.

"මුලින් සුව සේවකයකු ලෙස වැඩ කළ මම කොහොම හරි රියදුරකු වන්නට ඕනෑ යයි සිතුවා. මුලින්ම අවස්ථාව ලැබුණේ පණිවුඩ ගෙන යන රියදුරකු ලෙස වැඩ කරන්නටයි. හැබැයි ඒ කෙටි කාලයකට විතරයි."

ජයා රියදුරු බලපත්‍රය ලබා ගන්නා කාලයේ රටේ කලබලකාරී තත්වයක් තිබුණා. ඒ නිසා ඔහුගේ රියදුරු බලපත්‍රයේ ලිපිනය ලෙස දැක්වෙන්නේ කොළඹ 7, බුලර්ස් පාරේ, අංක 203 දරණ තැන එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ සංවිධානයේ මූලස්ථානයයි.

එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ ජනගහණ අරමුදලේ වාහන පදවමින් ඔහු ලංකාවේ නො ගිය දෙසක් නැත.

"මම ඉතාම ආසාවෙන් මේ රැකියාව කළේ. පොඩි පොඩි අඩුපාඩු සිදු වුණත් ආයතන ප්‍රධානීන් හැම විටම මානුෂිකව සැලකුවා." ජයා කතාදැනා පූර්වකව පවසන්නේ හැන්දෑවට වැඩ අවසන් වුණාම ඉඳහිට සිදු වුණ පොඩි, පොඩි සිදුවීම් මතක් කරමින්.

රියදුරකු ලෙස 19 වසරක සේවාව නිම කර ජයා එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ ජනගහණ අරමුදලෙන් විශ්‍රාම යන්නේ වැඩිහිටියකු ලෙස සමාජයට සිය දායකත්වය තවදුරටත් සපයන බලාපොරොත්තු ඇතිවයි.

"තව ටික කාලයක් වැඩ කරන්නට තිබුණා නම් හොඳයි. විශ්‍රාම ගිහින් පෞද්ගලික රියදුරෙකු ලෙස වැඩ කරන්නට දැනටමත් මට කතා කරලා තිබෙනවා. හැතිනම් හස්ත කර්මාන්තවල යෙදෙන මගේ එකම දුවත් එක්ක ව්‍යාපාරයක් පටන් ගන්නවා." ජයා සිය අනාගත සැලසුම් පවසනවා.

ජයා ගැන මේ කතාව සමාජීය කරන්නට මා එහි රසබර ම කොටස ඉතිරි කර ගත්තා. ඒ තමයි, ජයාගේ පෙම් කතාව. ඔහුගේ ප්‍රිය බිරිඳ කේ. ඩී. සුමනාවතී ඔහුට හමු වන්නේත් එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ සංවිධානයේ කොළඹ මූලස්ථාන තුමියේදීමයි. ඒ කාලයේ ඇයත් එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ තොරතුරු මධ්‍යස්ථානයේ සේවය කළා. දැන් ගේදොර බලාගෙන, ලස්සන ගෙවත්තකුත් හඩත්තු කරගෙන ඉන්න ජයාට සුමනා උදේ බැඳ දෙන රසවත් දුවල් බත් මුල ලිහනකල් රියදුරු කාමරේ සගයන් බලා ඉන්නා බව මට කීවේ ඇත්ටත්.



IS SRI LANKA'S HEALTH SYSTEM READY TO FACE THE POPULATION SHIFT?



Commemorating Universal Health Coverage Day, UNFPA together with the World Health Organization (WHO) in Sri Lanka and the Sri Lanka Medical Association hosted a press conference to highlight the importance of ensuring that health systems are readily in place to support the needs of the growing elderly population in Sri Lanka.

IS SRI LANKA GROWING OLD BEFORE IT GROWS RICH?



**1 IN 5 PEOPLE IN SRI LANKA
WILL BE ABOVE THE AGE OF 60 YEARS.**

While ageing is a triumph of development that indicates Sri Lanka's continuous investment in the wellbeing of its people, is Sri Lanka ready to face this rapid demographic transition?

To mark International Day of Older Persons, UNFPA in partnership with the Ministry of Social Welfare and Primary Industries convened the first of a series of high-level policy dialogues, titled 'Ageing Without Limits: Enhancing Policies. Maximizing Potentials.', which aims to provide policy-level inputs to maximize the opportunity of population ageing with guest speakers from Japan and Malaysia.

The theme for the first dialogue was 'Making Active Ageing a Reality', with a focus on how population ageing must be addressed through an evidence-based approach, life-cycle approach, and rights-based approach.

UNFPA will continue this series of dialogues to provide inputs to strengthen policies and support the development and implementation of a holistic system to ensure Sri Lanka is prepared to maximize the opportunity of this demographic transition.



Making Active
Ageing a Reality:
<http://bit.ly/2YfsjDk>



<https://bit.ly/2000Cpz>

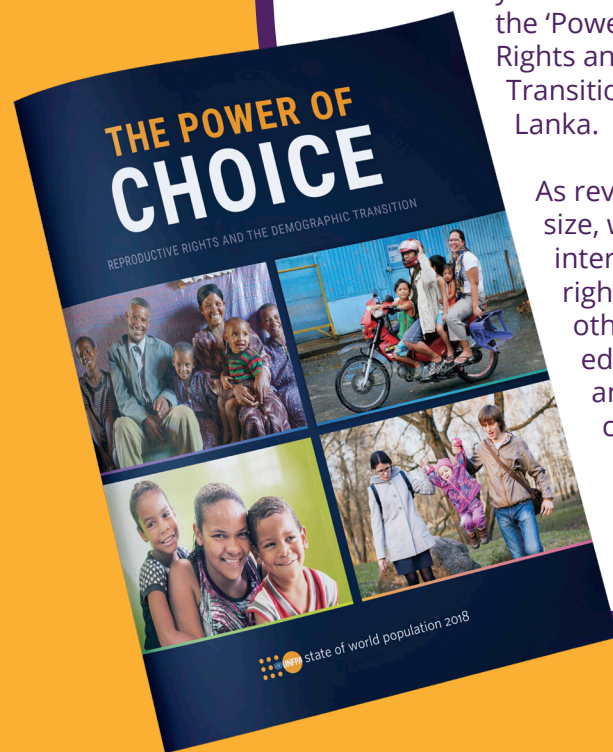
THE POWER OF CHOICE: STATE OF WORLD POPULATION 2018

The State of World Population is a global report published by UNFPA each year. In 2018, the report focused on the 'Power of Choice: Reproductive Rights and the Demographic Transition', a topic very relevant to Sri Lanka.

As revealed in the report, family size, whether small or large, is intertwined with reproductive rights, which are tied to many other rights such as health and education, adequate income, and the freedom to make choices. When people lack

choice, it can have a long-term impact on fertility rates, often making them higher or lower than what most people desire. Where people can exercise their rights, they tend to thrive. Where these rights are stifled, people often fail to achieve their full potential, impeding economic and social progress.

#SWOP2018



The Power Of Choice -
Reproductive Rights and
the Demographic Transition:
<https://bit.ly/2X06Vva>

When women and girls have access to quality healthcare, they are empowered to stay in school and to earn an income. When they are healthy, educated, and empowered, the next generation benefits. When the next generation thrives, society prospers.

This is how universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights contribute towards a progressive and sustainably developed Sri Lanka.



Annual Report 2018
Sri Lanka

**Potential: Ensuring Reproductive
Rights and Choices for all Sri Lankans**

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Abdul Basith

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